

FESTIVALS IN EVENT TOURISM: THE CASE OF INTERNATIONAL IZMIR ART FESTIVAL

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Abstract

Event tourism examined as a concept of special interest tourism has contributed significantly to tourism, travel, leisure and recreation and lodging industries recently by becoming a strong tourism demand generating factor. In addition this, event tourism is an important way to catch social, economic, environmental goals and provide benefits for the societies and destinations. Events are one of the important attractions of destination and provide tourists with updated information about culture, society and history. Festivals and public celebrations found in all societies are increasingly seen as unique tourist attractions and destination image makers with a variety of other special events. They play a big role in making contribution to the cultural exchange among the people of the world and provide important contributions to the development of the cities and making them a brand city. The aim of this research is to put the importance on the event tourism with so many different festivals, religious/cultural organizations, sport activities and scientific organizations to make Izmir take its path in international path. In this context, so many people will visit Izmir. This research also aims to make Izmir which is accepted as the cradle of civilizations with a history of 8500 year a worldwide known city of art and culture with Izmir International Art Festival after ages. As a result of the research, it is understood that Izmir International Art Festival organized for the last 26 years has a significant role in recognition of Izmir in international area. The famous exclusive artists, groups and orchestras which were invited attracted the attention of world to Izmir.

Keywords: *Event Tourism; Izmir; Festival; Izmir International Art Festival*

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1.Introduction

The ancient epoch when the leisure phenomenon not developed, only religious festivals and celebrations done as a leisure activity and celebrations of crop cultivation done for all the festivals and agricultural societies, later during the time of middle epoch or epoch before industry, the leisure phenomenon happened as a result of the emergence of business and labor with the transformation of rural farmer to urban labor, the demand of leisure is at the same time one of the group needs that need to be met necessarily. The constant increase in the number of wishes and participation tendencies of the people organized in various groups in society is observed with this understanding. Especially, there has been a significant increase in the number of sport activities which constitute important activity areas in the World and Turkey (Karaküçük, 1997:94). The main reasons of this increase can be categorized as follows;

- Development of technology
- Increase of average age
- Increase of revenues
- Importance of time

The mean of age, technology, revenues and the chances emerged in leisure played a big role in the increase of demand for these activities. The changes are shown in Table.1.

Table 1: Factors contributing to the development of activities

SHIFT	FROM	TO
Demographic	Young	Old
Technological	Low Tech	High Tech
Disposable Income Shifts	Limited	Limitless
Time Shifts	Defined Time	Undefined Time

Source: Joe Jeff Goldblatt, “A Future for Event Management: The Analysis of Major Trends Impacting the Emerging Profession” Event Beyond 2000 Report, 2000, 4.

The events can be classified in terms of their content and extent (Allen, O’toole et al, 2001: 4). These events are listed below;

Events are classified into four groups in terms of their size;

- Mega events
- Major events
- Regional events
- Local events

In terms of their content; the events are listed as;

- Festivals
- Sport events
- Meeting, incentive, convention, exhibition (MICE)
- Business events

According to Getz, the events can be classified in three groups. In the first group, there are events such as cultural celebrations, political events and art and entertainment events. The second group consists of commercial events, education and scientific events and finally in the last group of this classification, there are sport events, recreational activities and special events (Getz, 2008: 403).

The recreational activities which are done voluntarily on personal choice with an aim of protecting the human body which is seriously affected by the intensive work of human-being, routine life style or negative environmental effects, regaining, protecting and keeping the mental health and getting pleasure providing personal enjoyment in the leisure time are defined as events (Karaküçük, 1997: 21). Events are an important motivator of tourism, and figure prominently in the development and marketing plans of most destinations. The roles and impacts of planned events within tourism have been well documented, and are of increasing importance for destination competitiveness (Getz, 2008: 403).

Events are the activities which are organized with the aims listed below;

- To meet the social or individual needs arising as a result of humanity's acting together

- To achieve the common goals as a group or organization in some certain situations instead of individual way
- To share a common feeling or an idea
- To be a social being in social life (Poloma, 2007:49).

The social, cultural, economic and technological changes have played a fundamental role in causing the changes of goals of organization, qualifications, organization places and dimensions and on the increase of activity diversification of the events. In this context, the dimension of the events which are organized for social cohesion, influence of society and charitable activities was changed and events have been started to be used within the capital improvement programs of the organizations at the same time (Pira, 2004:31). Event activities were also regarded as an application supporting the general policy of the organizations, making contribution in the process of achieving goals and they have been turned into strategic structure planned by public relations managers (Mekanlı, 2005:37).

Event tourism is defined as the systematic planning, development and marketing of the natural and physical tourism sources as image making touristic activities (Getz and Wicks, 1993:2). The event tourism has become one of the most important aspects among the types of special interest tourism of the tourism industry (Crompton and McKay, 1997:429). Event tourism is not usually recognized as a separate Professional field. Mostly it is seen as an application of, or specialty within national tourism offices and destination marketing/management organizations (Getz, 2008: 405). Furthermore, event tourism is regarded as a motivating marketing tool used in destination marketing (Richie, 1997:51). Tourists want to take part in planned activities and get to know about the destination at the same time. In this respect, event tourism is some kind of helper to the presentation and promotion of touristic destinations and it is preferred destination marketers (Getz, 2008: 403). Event tourism plays a big role in making significant contributions to tourism, travel, leisure and lodging industries by becoming a creator of a strong tourism demand and is an important tool to catch the various economic, social and environmental aims and to make benefits for the communities and destinations (Arcodia and Robb, 2000: 13). The

development and organization of the events as a result of the increase in competition between touristic destinations have turned into a big sector.

According to Der Wagen (2001), the events;

- Provide participants live an unforgettable experience
- Require cost for planning and organization
- Be prepared for a short period of time
- Require long and careful application of planning strategy
- Be organized once in a year
- Require co-operation of many groups

The destinations make competition one another in a regional, national and international way to attract the tourists who will full their hotels, museums, stadiums, make expenditure. There is no advantage of competition in working staff, tax regulations and tax incentives; the perceived image of the cities only has advantage of competition (Denis et al, 1999:54). The most important element between tourism and its activities are the transfer of image related events and the impact of the activities on the empowerment destination brand, support and change. The transfer of event image to destination is quite important in realizing the natural and physical attractions of the cities (Jago et al, 2002:114). Event tourism consists of planned cultural, sportive, political and business activities. These are Olympic Games, world-wide fairs, festivals, parks and other similar planned events, formal visits, meetings, parties and big congresses (Karagöz, 2006:16). Even though event tourism consists of artistic, cultural and scientific activities as much as sport activities, there is a significant role played by sport activities on the increase of event industry. The reason for this is that sport activities are seen as a positive value in the economic and physical and regional developments in the market (Chalip and McGuirty, 2004:167).

Event tourism is related with the roles it played in the development of the activities, destinations and increase of attractiveness. In addition to this, events do not only serve a destination to attract tourists, they both help to protect and develop social identity at the same time (Derrett, 2004:39). Event tourism has become the most important branch of special interest tourism and become the most important phenomenon of marketing

strategies and targeted destinations. Each society or institution may use these events about tourism in an effective way. The effects of both daily as well as night visits are an important motivating factor (Getz, 1997:52). Event tourism is the fastest growing part of the tourism industry and one of the most important types which is used in the development, marketing and marking of the destinations (Peters and Pikkemaat, 2005:147). Events play a fundamental role in making foreign tourists stay at a destination for a longer stay as a tourism attraction and making the domestic tourists stay in the country instead of traveling abroad and making them do their tourism expenses in the region (Getz, 1997:52). Seasonality is regarded as one of the most important problems of tourism industry

Events have an important advantage in decreasing the effect of its seasonality and it makes benefits from natural attractions in off-season. For example; if the high season of the destination is summer time, winter activities may be a source of benefit or events should consist of indoor activities regardless of the weather. Many destinations prefer to organize the celebration activities of local people and provide these people with more authentic activities. If this strategy is implemented in a successful way, then the seasonality problem of the tourism industry may disappear. There are so many advantages of event tourism for the destinations where they are organized as follows (Getz, 1997: 55);

- To attract tourists (especially in the off-peak season)
- Make diversification in tourism industry
- To make the distribution of tourism equally demand between different destinations in the country
- To create new sources of revenue for the regions
- Increase the awareness and attraction of destinations
- To make the new infrastructure and services or develop the current infrastructure and services

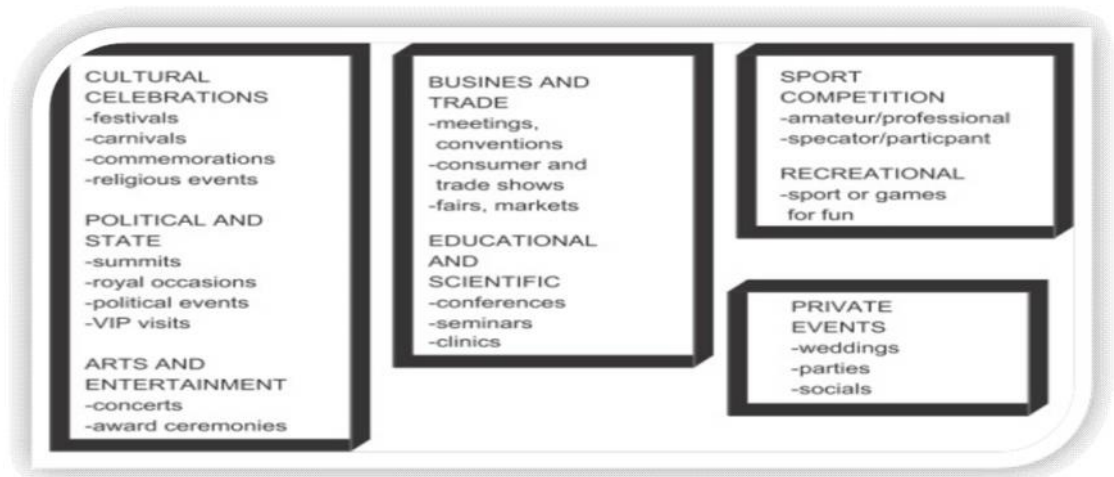
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- To attract the media's attention to destination
- To help destination to have a brand by making strong and active images
- To encourage people thinking that one visit is enough to make a re-visit the destination

Figure 1; provides a typology of the main categories of planned events based primarily on their form—that is, obvious differences in their purpose and program. Some are for public celebration (this category includes so-called ‘community festivals’ which typically contain a large variety in their programming and aim to foster civic pride and cohesion), while others are planned for purposes of competition, fun, entertainment, business or socializing.

Often they require special-purpose facilities, and the managers of those facilities (like convention centers and sport arenas) target specific types of events. Professional associations and career paths have traditionally been linked to these event types (Getz, 2008: 4).

Figure 1: Typology of planned events



Source: Getz D. “Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution and Research”, *Tourism Management*, Vol.29, No.1, (2008), 403-428.

2. Festivals in Event Tourism

Festivals, carnivals and social memorial days develop the touristic attraction of a region. Festivals are the celebrations such as dance, drama, comedy, movie, music, variable arts, crafts, ethnic or local cultural heritage, religious traditions, historically important events, food and wine and religious ceremonies. The original appeal of the festivals comes from the fact that they are out of the ordinary life far from celebration and entertainment media. The festivals are usually organized with an aim for protecting and developing local culture and history, recreation, making employment opportunities and developing the local tourism industry (Günersel, 1997:28). Moreover, festivals also attract high-contact travelers willing to have more experiences with local people, explorers involved in the host society and allosentrics who are in the research of egotism with their cultural and educational motives. The most important distinctive characteristic of the festivals from other events is that they are focused on society and celebration. The themes of the festivals generally arise from their own society. What is emphasized here with the society concept is a group of people having locational and operational partnership (Butcher, 1993:19).

Getz (1991:69) defines event tourism as tourism activity comprising festivals and other activities. The festivals and other events are investigated as destination image makers and tourist attractions. Indeed, the societies trying to make profits from tourism industry try to make difference about these subjects by hosting community-oriented festivals (Delamere and Hinch, 1997:27; Higham and Ritchie, 2001:43).

Falassi stated that the definitions and meanings of festivals in literature have been made in various ways. The definition made by Falassi (1995:37) is;

- Celebrations based on holy and cultural traditions and customs
- Celebrations of an important people or an event and cultivation of an important crop
- Public fairs and feasts

According to (Weaver and Robinson, 1989: 7); there are so many reasons for organizing festivals such as;

- To increase the excitement and pride of the community

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- To show why community special and unique
- To develop image
- To provide income for special projects
- To create opportunities in art and other creative areas to be interested for local people
- To honor a person or important event

Festivals are regarded as one of the types of even tourism, making people socialize one another and enriching their cultural lives rich. Festivals are known to have a very crucial impact on the human life. On one hand, they provide various social activities to participants; on the other hand they are accepted as a source of income for the host destinations. The most well-known type of festivals is the artistic festivals and these kinds of festivals may play a fundamental role in collecting different branches of art in the same place. For example; Queensland Bicentennial Music, Sydney Biennial and Writers' Festival. One of the other well-known and growing types of festivals is the festival is the food and wine festival. The organization way of this kind of festivals may vary depending on the place of organizations. It is organized in different ways from cities to small towns (Allen et al, 2002:15). Film festivals may be an international festival such as Cannes Film Festival and short regional organized festivals.

Festivals and events have an important perspective in destination marketing. Community festivals and special events are developing more and more every day and local festivals is an instrument used in destination marketing and empowerment of local economy. Furthermore, festivals are also regarded as one of the most important holiday motivators (Getz, 1999:326).

According to Getz (1997), there are important roles of festivals for a destination. These roles are listed below;

- Create an attraction
- Image
- Animation
- Growth

Every year in the world, there is a multitude of special festivals and events, some more known than others to the public. What is important is that these festivals and events generate an image boost and offer plenty of advantages to the host city. There are some examples of these festivals such as Oktoberfest Munich, Germany, which is one of the greatest festivities of the world, The Las Fallas Festival (The Festival of Carpenters and Fire) from Valencia and The George Enescu Festival and International Competition Bucharest, Romania (Popescu and Corboş, 2012:19).

Events and festivals are an essential part of the urban life, having generally, much diversified themes, such as thematic festivals, political events, cultural activities, sport events, religious meetings, etc., and can be held at an international level (such as: Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup, World Expo), as well as at a national level (for example: Oktoberfest from Munich, Las Fallas (The Festival of Carpenters and Fire) from Valencia, the Ice Festival from Harbin (China), the “George Enescu” Festival from Bucharest, Romania). Such type of events are becoming more and more important both for the urban development (having a great impact on the image of the host city), as well as for its inhabitants, as research related to this area have developed rapidly, becoming a popular subject (Popescu and Corboş, 2012:19).

Events and festivals which are celebrated in nearly every city, many towns and even in some villages of Turkey and become traditional are organized with an aim of presentation, promotion and protection of the rich culture of Anatolia. Events and festivals representing the traditional culture of Anatolia also aims to introduce and promote the cultural richness of the place where they are organized as well as to increase the spirit of unity and solidarity (Özalp,2006:53).

Izmir, one of the oldest settlements of Mediterranean basin and the biggest city of the Aegean region which is one of the seven regions of Turkey, is established at the end of the gulf having the same name, developed and grew by maintaining the importance in the history, became not only in the Aegean region, but also one of the most important trade, industry and culture centers of Turkey (Yıldırım and Çetinkaya,

2012:6). Izmir has so significant a potential in terms of tourism due to its natural structure, history and cultural assets and is one of the most important tourist centers of Turkey (Emekli 2009:16). Furthermore, Izmir is an extremely proper place for fairs, festivals and congress tourism due to convenience of transport, its position by the seaside, fair climatic conditions, historical cultural and many other similar assets. Besides, the traditionalized Izmir International Fair and many other specialized fairs organized in the Kültürpark Fair Area so far may entertain their visitors with wider participation at the New Fair Area covering an area of 337.000 square meters in Gaziemir district which will be established by Izmir Metropolitan Municipality (Yıldırım and Çetinkaya, 2012:7).

Table.2 shows the names of the festivals and events organized annually in Izmir. As it can be understood from the examples written below that the festivals and events organized in Izmir with a long history and a rich culture are as rich as the history of the city. These festivals are organized at different times during the year.

Table 2: List of the Festivals Organized in İzmir.

Name of the Festival	Place & Date
Karsiyaka Children Festival	Karşıyaka & 18/ 25 April
Cherry Festival	Kemalpaşa & 29 May-6 June
International Fishery Festival	Foça & 9 / 11 September
Bird Paradise & Spring & Kite Festival	Sasalı & May
Golden Cherry Culture & Art Festival	Kemalpaşa & May
Bergama Kermes Festival	Bergama & 1 / 7 June
June Peninsula Games	Selçuk & 11 / 15 June
International Izmir Festival	İzmir & 10 June / 10 July
International Child & Youth Theaters Festival	İzmir & 17 / 27 May
International Çeşme Sea Festival	Çeşme & July
International Music Festival	İzmir & 4 / 9 July
Çandarlı Culture & Art Festival	Çandarlı & 30 August / 1 June
International Watermelon Festival	Bayındır & July
Camel Wrestling Festival	Selçuk & January

Source: Izmir Directorate of Culture and Tourism

3. Izmir International Art Festival

Although special events organized in many countries in the world are a unique form of tourism product, they are not emphasized widely in tourism-related plans (Getz, 1989:125). In spite of the fact that they are local and regional narrow-scoped organizations, events have been examined in terms of their economic effects. However, the local events have started to be accepted as a touristic attraction and social events, which are getting more important day by day in terms of tourism industry and what is more that they have been regarded as important tourist attractions having economic affects for the environment for the last 20 years (Getz and Frisby,1990:7). Local activities have started to have a vital key in international, national, regional and local tourism marketing strategies. The experts about tourism marketing regard special events as important parts of tourism development and marketing plans and they make these events as touristic attractions consciously (Yoon et al, 2000:33).

The great activities in event tourism are the events which attract huge number of people, provide economic benefits and media-focused (McDonnell, 1998:10-12). Events represent a way of selling the city as a product, by attracting tourists, as well as industries and investments (Liu and Chen, 2007:255). Events of global importance (Olympic Games, World Expo or FIFA World Cup) offer opportunities for the host cities. This way, most of the urban areas (Munchen, Montreal, Moscow, Seoul, Barcelona, Sydney, Salt Lake, Torino, Beijing, and

Vancouver) which have been the host of the Olympic Games have taken advantage of this opportunity to present and sell themselves (Popescu and Corboş, 2012:20).

Festivals are generally organized in order to answer the specific needs of a community and in the same time to offer entertainment. These types of events have the power to offer people a feeling of social, geographical, cultural, etc. belonging. The typology of festivals, and generally of events, is a much diversified one. People usually find a reason to celebrate in almost every aspect that surrounds them, starting from religious rituals, military events, the day when a certain institution was established, and ending with customs less ordinary, such as ice sculptures (Japan, China, Norway, and Canada), the cheese rolling (England), the night of the radishes (Mexico), and many others (Popescu and Corboş,2012:21).

Izmir, which is accepted as an extremely proper place for fairs, festivals and congress tourism due to convenience of transport, its position by the seaside, fair climatic conditions, historical cultural and many other similar assets hosts so many worldwide known events and festivals every year including Izmir International Art Festival and Izmir European Jazz Festival.

The 26th Izmir International Art Festival organized by Izmir Foundation for Culture, Arts and Education (IKSEV) between the dates of 4th June and 28th September 2012 and the biggest culture and art festival of the city is accepted in this group. One of the most important reasons of success for this festival comes from its aims and duties of the festival. Due to these aims and duties; they intend to make search, examine, teach, learn, protect and spread culture and art to the masses. Izmir International

Art Festival is organized regularly to fulfill these aims and duties. They organize various national and international organizations in Izmir and in the other parts of the country. They make collection and archives, open exhibitions, make some publications and organize concerts, performances, lecturers, symposiums, seminars and congresses (IKSEV, 2013).

Izmir International Art festival made Izmir which is accepted as the cradle of civilizations with a history of 8500 year as the city of art and culture after ages. Izmir International Art festival which managed to bring the most skilled artists with the organizations made up to now attracted millions of people and made thousands of artists make their performances in Izmir. More and more people from abroad and within the country attend this festival. The 26th Izmir International Art Festival was attended by 22.000 people in 2012. In 2011, 18.000 people watched this festival. Izmir International Art Festival which makes big efforts to increase the number of the places for the performances added so many worth-seeing places including Ancient Ephesus City which is a candidate of World Heritage List by UNESCO.

The most important results of this process are the opportunities had by attendants to see those important and worth-seeing places (IKSEV,2013). Izmir International Art Festival which makes many historical values and cultural inherits of Izmir worldwide known as a task, managed to add the Virgin Mary House on Nightingale Mountain, St.Policarp Church accepted as one of the first seven churches of Christianity, Agora, Bayraklı Archeological Site where the city was founded, house of mother goddess Metropolis and Kadifekale (Velvet Castle) as well as Ephesus Ancient Theatre and Celsius Library to its list of performance places and managed to bring these historical places with art and art lovers.

Izmir International Art Festival welcomed many important and popular artists and groups such as Joan Baez, Sting, Ray Charles, Chris De Burgh, Martha Graham, Chech Filarmoni Orchestra, Red Army Choir, Soprano Cecilia Gasdia, Güher - Süher Pekinel, Mihael Barshnikov, Byran Adams, James Brown, Paco De Lucia, I Musici, Fazıl Say, The Philharmonia Orchestra, Leonidas Kavakos, Julian Llyod Weber, Kudsi Erguner, Sholomo Mintz, Maxim Vengerov, Elton John, Soprano Kiri Te Kanawa and José Carreras in the big amphitheater of Ephesus Ancient City for the last 16 years (IKSEV,2013). It is a widely known fact that Izmir International Art Festival with its music and activities is an event having the potential to attract foreign tourists as well as the attendance of local people. In the 26th festival, 15 different art organizations have been invited from different countries in the world. The artists and groups which have been invited are so famous and important ones in the world. In this context, both foreign and local tourists have a possibility to see and watch the artists and groups which they did not have any chance before with this festival (IKSEV, 2013).

4. Conclusion

Event tourism is defined as the planning, development and marketing of the activities which develop natural and physical tourism resources in the destinations, make image and as a tourist attraction. Events are divided into different types of groups depending on objectives and themes. In this context, so many different events are defined. These events are cultural/religious festivals, social celebrations, festivals, artistic and entertainment activities, sportive, business and scientific activities. The artistic and cultural activities played a significant role in the development of event tourism. The reason for this is the fact that the activities of cultural and artistic festivals have positive effects on the economic and physical developments of the cities. The activities of Izmir International

Art Festival contain large, middle and small-scale events with a potential to attract tourists. The activities with the purpose of tourism are created as the performances made during the festival in so many different parts of the city.

Festivals make various positive contributions to the destinations such as increasing the satisfaction level of the visitors, prolonging the stay in the host community, making encouragement to the economic activities. Tourists attending these types of festivals are more interested in art and culture in comparison with the other tourist types and they desire to visit the cultural inherits and historical touristic places as well. In this context, they intend to stay longer and spend more money in the destinations.

The 26th Izmir International Art Festival plays a vital role in so many positive contributions such as creation of employment, advertisement of the historical places and meeting the city's audiences with the increasing number of its attendances. Izmir International Art Festival with its rich program proved to be one of the biggest trump cards of Izmir during the candidacy process of EXPO 2020. As a result of this study, festivals have been proved to be very effective. Izmir International Art Festival fulfilled its duties completely.

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